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0027390.4 9 November 2000 (09.11.2000) GB(71) Applicant (for all designated States except US): **MARCONI COMMUNICATIONS LIMITED** [GB/GB]; P.O. Box 53, New Century Park, Coventry CV3 1HJ (GB).

(72) Inventors; and

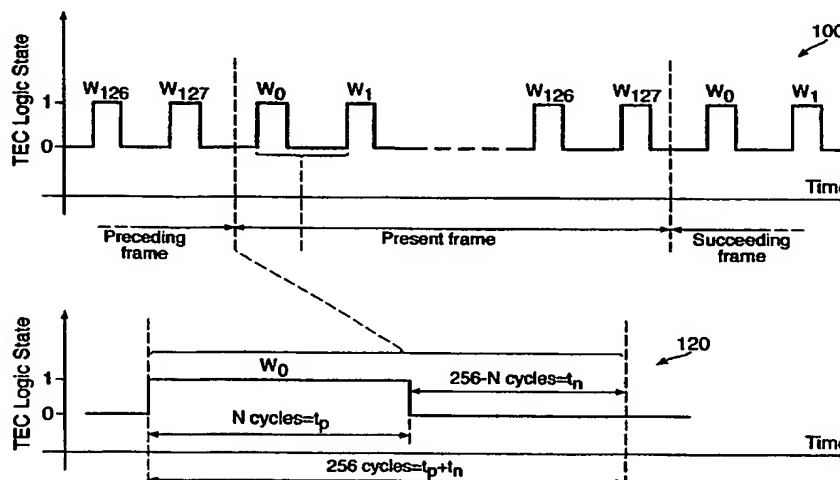
(75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): **BROWN, Roger, Warwick** [GB/GB]; 59 Chetwynd Road, Toton, Nottingham NG9 6FW (GB). **DENNIS, Earl, Anthony** [GB/GB]; 16 Shepton Crescent, Aspley Estate, Nottingham NG85QP (GB). **VASS, Darren, William** [GB/GB]; 26 Frederick Street, Long Eaton, Nottingham NG10 2DR (GB). **BUTLER, Graham** [GB/GB]; 53 Farm Road, Chilwell, Nottingham NG9 5DA (GB). **LEACH, Michael, John** [GB/GB]; Manor House, The Lane, Awworth, Nottingham NG16 2QS (GB).(74) Agent: **COLLIER, Ian, Terry**; Marconi Intellectual Property, Waterhouse Lane, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 2QX (GB).

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(54) Title: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR GENERATING A PULSE WIDTH MODULATED SIGNAL AND OPTICAL ATTENUATOR CONTROLLED BY A PULSE WIDTH MODULATED SIGNAL

(57) Abstract: A method of generating a pulse width modulated (PWM) signal comprises: receiving digital demand data V_{control} comprising at least one more significant bit (bit_7 to bit_{14}) and at least one less significant bit (bit_0 to bit_6). The PWM signal comprises a sequence of one or more frames (100), each frame: comprising a plurality of PWM pulses (W_1 to W_{127}) whose duty cycle is substantially governed by the at least one more significant bit (bit_7 to bit_{14}); and having at least one of its PWM pulses selected to have its duty cycle modified in response to the at least one less significant bit (bit_0 to bit_6); each of the at least one less significant bit (bit_0 to bit_6) uniquely mapping onto the at least one selected PWM pulse of the frame (100). The invention is also concerned with apparatus operable according to the above method and an optical attenuator whose optical attenuation is dependent upon its temperature and in which the temperature and hence attenuation is controlled using the above PWM signal.

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